



Department of
Health Services
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

High Quality
Patient Centered
Cost-Effective Health Care

From Dr. Katz

FAST FACTS

A Message From the Director

What a great time we had celebrating the emptying of the Soto warehouse (see story to the right)! At this one event, so many themes of the DHS transformation were displayed. Most notably, all the work was done by DHS employees. It was accomplished ahead of schedule and with great professionalism. The success in destroying these unneeded records will save the county more than \$700,000 a year. That money will go for patient care services, as it should. Shredding the unneeded records saves us from a potential security breach and protects the confidential information of our patients. Our labor partner, SEIU 721, was present cheering on the workers. And finally, just for show, the cooks tending the BBQ were wearing aprons with the new Health Agency logo across the chest. Many people's hard work went into this success but a special shout out to Gerardo Pinedo, who used his legal talents to secure us approval for destroying the old records, who learned to drive a fork lift, who solved innumerable problems on the way, and who threw the party. The people who work at Health Information Management were also honored at the Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, including Casey Jones, who has worked for the County for 55 years. He is my role model. I hope to get to 55 years of government service myself (I have 26 years, so I am almost half way there!) Best wishes.



Mitch Katz, MD

Street Outreach Teams Build Trust First

By Michael Wilson



On a brisk Wednesday morning at 6th and Maple streets in downtown's Skid Row, a group huddles over coffee and clipboards. The members are part of a multi-disciplinary street-based engagement team known as "City, County, Community," or "C3" for short. They are getting ready to conduct outreach to homeless residents who live in the area. Skid Row is 4.3 square miles and ground zero of the homeless crisis in L.A. County. The sidewalks in every direction are packed with tents and cardboard shelters. City officials

(See 'TEAMS' on back)

Employees Secure Medical Records and Achieve Huge Savings

By Gerardo Pinedo



This week the Department of Health Services honored the women and men at the Health Information Management (HIM) Division with Outstanding Public Service awards after completing the Soto Warehouse Certified Paper Medical Records Consolidation Project. Thanks to the great work of our DHS clerical staff, our storage of patient medical records has become more secure and the County is achieving great financial savings which can be allocated toward direct patient care.

After many decades of implementing an antiquated paper medical records storage system, the HIM Division successfully updated, with the help of County Counsel and the County CEO, the Department's retention policies to conform to national standards. This project provided a critical final step as DHS fully embraces the use of an electronic health record system and eliminates a duplicative, costly, inefficient, and outdated practice of maintaining a very large industrial warehouse full of paper. The end result is that essential scanned records are readily available on computer screens, unnecessary paper has been certified and securely recycled, and the County has eliminated an expensive commercial lease.

Additionally, the HIM Division is now able to allocate our valuable human resources to more productive areas where our employees are diligently and productively helping to provide high levels of customer service directly to our patients in important areas such as the Release of Information Office and other critical areas providing public services that are high in demand. Commemorating this milestone achievement by our HIM clerical staff was very important, as signified by the presentation of awards to all 50 DHS staff who made completion of the project a reality. Presentation of the awards was co-led by Health Agency Director, Dr. Mitchell Katz; SEIU Vice-President, Linda Dent; and representing the Office of County Supervisor



Hilda Solis, Health Deputy, Sarkis Semerdjyan. A crucial element in the successful completion of this important project was the fact that it was completed 100% by permanent full-time County employees who worked daily, including weekends, to resolve complex logistical issues at the 80,000 square foot industrial warehouse for 2 1/2 months. Our employees completed the project ahead of schedule and did not incur any outside costs. Due to the large success of this project, it is now being used as a model at other HIM facilities countywide. DHS salutes our clerical staff for a job well done!

(‘TEAMS’)

hose down blocks of streets littered with food, clothes, debris, even a bible. The objective today is to follow-up with known clients to make sure they are keeping their medical appointments at the nearby Star Clinic run by DHS, or connect them with other service providers. The team members draw on years of experience and a carefully honed instinct to know how and when to reach out and offer assistance. “The aim is to engage, assist and house,” says Libby Boyce, LCSW, director of access, referral and engagement in the DHS Housing for Health division. She oversees the effort. “What we had before C3 were well-intentioned but uncoordinated efforts, a drop in the ocean for the need here. The goal of C3 was to pilot an intensive effort with the right resources to have impact.” All of the residents on Skid Row are medically complex says Boyce. They need shelter, medical care, mental health and substance abuse treatment. The outreach team wants to be a visible, friendly presence to build relationships and trust, a first step to moving those who are most ill off the streets into permanent supportive housing. “The myth is that Skid Row is scary and everyone is hostile, but the reality is that most of the people living here are friendly and there are deep social circles and bonds,” says Sara Short, C3 operations director. She worked with the homeless in San Francisco before moving to Los Angeles. She calls out to clients by name as she walks down the street. The team makes its way to a local park a few blocks away where residents gather in the morning. The formerly blighted area now has a lawn, wall murals and a basketball court. Residents play board games at tables or rest on nearby benches. The team engages “Carl,” an adult male who has a chronic illness and has missed several medical appointments. He tells the team he has other



appointments next week, but agrees to come in on an afternoon. Four teams do this work every day in four quadrants of Skid Row. Each team consists of a nurse, a mental health specialist, a substance abuse counselor, a Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Emergency Response Team member, a case manager and two AmeriCorps members. Since launching last year, C3 has engaged over 2,000 individuals and connected them to housing and services. Over 500 people have been placed in interim housing, 360 individuals have been assigned to permanent housing, and over 200 are already housed. Team member Lupe Palacios Arellano finds the work satisfying. “When you think about it, all of us are just one step away from here. We get by month to month, but we don’t know what will happen because of an illness or loss of a job, or things that just happen to people in their lives.” The engagement teams are concerned by the changing demographics of Skid Row, validated by the recent 2017 L.A. County homeless count. Homelessness is growing, not slowing. There are more homeless moving on the streets, more women and younger people than before.



Rising costs of living in Los Angeles coupled with proposed rollbacks to Medicaid in Washington could lead to more waves of homeless without access to affordable housing or adequate medical care – realities that will further strain County-run emergency rooms and other resources. For now, the teams stay focused on linking residents to services and replicating C3 countywide. There is a now C3 team in Venice and two teams working in the L.A. Metro system. A team based in Manchester Square by LAX is coming soon. All together there will be a total of 25 new teams using the C3 outreach model over the next fiscal year.

County Residents Trained for ‘Sidewalk Saves’

By Michael Wilson

Over 5,000 L.A. County residents were trained in hands-only resuscitation during “Sidewalk CPR” held June 2. The annual event sponsored by the EMS Agency, the American Heart Association and the L.A. County Fire Department trains people in CPR at over 50 locations including hospitals, fire stations, and shopping malls. At a morning press conference held at an elementary school in Eagle Rock, medical experts said there’s a brief window of time to increase chances of survival by doing rapid chest compressions to keep blood flowing to vital organs until first responders arrive. The training takes 10 minutes and can be done by anyone, even kids. “Every year we see more momentum and awareness around this training,” said EMS Agency director Cathy Chidester. “We hope those who get trained will then train others in their homes and workplaces for a snowball effect. CPR saves lives and takes just minutes to learn. None of us know when we will be called upon to help save a loved one or a bystander in need.” Chidester said people have a misconception that cardiac arrest only happens to older persons. Cardiac arrest victims are often young people who are athletes and physically active. “Heart disease is often silent and doesn’t discriminate.” At the press conference, cardiac arrest victim John Kayon shared his harrowing account of having slight chest pain during a bike ride in Palos Verdes just a week earlier. After riding to a fire station to get checked out, he went into full cardiac arrest and was transported by paramedics to the hospital where emergency physicians inserted two stents to restore blocked arteries. ‘I shouldn’t be standing here today talking to you, I’m one of the lucky ones,’ he said. Less than 10 percent of the nearly 350,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrest victims survive nationwide. Only 46 percent of victims receive CPR from a bystander. Once trained, citizens are encouraged to download the PulsePoint mobile app for iOS and Android to receive notifications that someone nearby is in need of CPR.



Health Centers Achieve Vaccination Excellence

The Coastal Health Centers, including Long Beach Comprehensive, Willington, Bellflower and the Torrance Public Health site were recognized by Dr. Hal Yee for achieving the 2016-2017 employee influenza



(Left to Right) Debra Cornelius, Erika Sweet, Gary Garcia, Dr. Jeffrey Barbosa, Dr. Hal Yee, Dr. Alexander Moy, and Thuy Banh.

vaccination excellence award. They attained a vaccination rate of 86% and a compliance rate of 100%. One of the best ways to prevent transmission of influenza to our patients is to vaccinate healthcare workers. The Coastal Centers have demonstrated their commitment to patient safety and quality of care by supporting influenza vaccination of their staff. Next year your facility could earn the traveling plaque by getting vaccinated to protect yourself and our patients!

U.S. Senator Kamala Harris Tours MLK Outpatient Center

U.S. Senator Kamala Harris toured the MLK Outpatient Center this month, where she talked to providers about the opioid epidemic and visited a recuperative care center. She was joined by L.A. County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, MLK Outpatient Center chief executive Cynthia Oliver, DHS deputy director for community health, Mark Ghaly, MD, and MLK Community Hospital chief executive Elaine Batchlor, MD, MPH. Harris spoke with patients and providers to learn about the positive impacts of Medicaid coverage expansion under the Affordable Care Act. A GOP health care bill under consideration now in Washington would cut Medicaid by more than \$800 billion and result in 14 million Americans losing health care coverage next year. An estimated 30,000 patients treated at the MLK Outpatient Center would be impacted by a repeal of the Medicaid expansion.

